RNA FOR A BETTER LIFE IN THE HEIGHTS

RIVERVIEW Neighborhood Association

April, 1994

232 Ogden Avenue - Jersey City, N.J. 07307 - (201) 798-0493

RNA IS NOT AFFILIATED WITH ANY POLITICAL PARTY, ORGANIZATION OR ELECTED OFFICIAL

Meeting Minutes

March 8, 1994

Captain George Geyer was RNA's main guest at the March meeting to discuss the downsizing of the City's Fire Department. The City wants to reduce the manpower levels which could result in the elimination of certain firecompanies or possibly the closing of certain firehouses. To emphasize the detrimental effect that such a budget cut would make in Jersey City, a video was shown that demonstrated how quickly a fire can spread in a home environment.

The Captain also discussed the fact that with a reduced fire-fighting staff, more fires would have to be responded to by out-of-town fire departments. This is a problem because these departments are not as familiar with Jersey City's local geography.

In response to this discussion, RNA passed a motion to officially send the Mayor and the City Council letters opposing any reduction in the City's Fire Department's personnel.

Officer Andrew Lancelotti introduced a brand new member of the community-base force, Officer John Curtis. Officers Lancelotti and Curtis urged all community members to communicate their complaints/problems immediately and to report anything suspicious behavior in

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RNA ELECTIONS

The following individuals are nominated for the annual RNA executive offices of:

Chairperson:
Ernie Quintero, Vito Brunetti, Greg Brickey

Vice Chairperson:
Greg Brickey, Ernie Quintero, Mike Pierro

Secretary:
Valerie Rea, Jean Buzzard, Kathy Packard

Treasurer:
Jack Rea

Sargent at Arms:
Mrs. Tuzzo, Carol Rebelowski

The elections will be held during the April 12th meeting.

TED CONRAD HONORED BY CITY COUNCIL

On March 9, 1994, the City Council of Jersey City honored Ted Conrad for his life-long civic activism. The City passed a resolution dedicating Riverview-Fisk Park to him, for his many community activities, including the campaigns to save the Hudson County Courthouse, the Apple Tree House and the Loew's Theatre.

But the most memorable activity to his local neighbors and friends, has been his continuous campaign to preserve and maintain Riverview-Fisk Park. To this end, the City and RNA will mount a dedication plaque on a granite cornerstone located in the Park's center garden. The plaque is inscribed with the following words:

"In appreciation for his many years of community service in preserving this open space for the benefit of our neighborhood, we dedicate Riverview-Fisk Park to Theodore E. Conrad."

The actual Park ceremony with the plaque dedication will occur in the late spring. RNA would like to thank Councilperson Bill Gaughan and Burn Brothers for their help and cooperation in this project.

COMING EVENTS ☞ APRIL 12th

RNA MEETING: THE SECOND TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH AT 7:15 PM
AT THE HARBOR VIEW HEALTH CARE CENTER

1) ELECTIONS for the **1994 -1995 RNA Executive Officers**
2) Preparations for **RNA FLEA MARKET** and **ANNUAL SPRING CLEANUP**
3) **UPDATE** on the recent robberies occurring on Franklin Street between Ogden and Palisade Avenues

THE RNA TENTH ANNUAL FLEA MARKET

RNA has decided to hold its Tenth Annual Flea Market in the spring this year. The organizing committee has promised that this Flea Market is going to be the best ever! It is scheduled for **Saturday, June 4th at Riverview-Fisk Park from 9 am to 4 pm.** Our raindate is Saturday, June11th.

Anyone who has been to our past flea markets can tell you its a time to browse and shop, and perhaps sell some of the unwanted items you have around your home. But most of all, the flea market is a chance for all of us as neighbors to be together and enjoy our neighborhood park.

As always, RNA will have a table at the flea market. You can help by donating anything you have around the house that you no longer need or want. (No spouses or significant others accepted!) Lamps, picture frames, dishes, knick-knacks, anything! Just take a look around and see if you've got anything to spare. We only ask the items be in good condition. You can bring the items to the park the morning of the flea market. The money we raise goes into the RNA treasury to fund projects and newsletter costs.

This year RNA has decided to provide **SPACE ONLY** for the merchants and sellers. If you are a RNA member you can reserve a space for $11.00. Non-members can reserve space for $16.00. (See attached application.)

Other perennial favorites will be at this year's flea market- hot dogs, baked goods, meatball sandwiches, coffee tea, and soda! RNA is arranging to have entertainment for the children, which will include finger printing and the Roll-off and McGruff characters. You can even take a chance on a 50/50 raffle.

We'll have something for everyone, so come join us in Riverview-Fisk Park JUNE 4th!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

It takes a lot of work to organize and run the FLEA MARKET. You can help:

--CLEAN-UP THE PARK BEFORE & AFTER EVENT
--PICK-UP, SET-UP, BREAK-DOWN, AND RETURN THE TABLES
--WORK AT THE RNA TABLE
--SELL HOT DOGS, BEVERAGES, AND BAKED GOODS
--PUBLICIZE THE FLEA MARKET

CALL ERNEST QUINTERO AT

963-5608

RIVERVIEW NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
TENTH ANNUAL FLEAMARKET
REGISTRATION FORM

Name:_____

Address:_____

_____

Phone No.:_____

DATE: SATURDAY, JUNE 4TH
TIME: 9 AM TO 4PM

LOCATION:
RIVERVIEW-FISK PARK

RAINDATE JUNE 11TH

PRICES FOR SPACE ONLY:
1)RNA MEMBERS: **$11.00**
2)NON-MEMBERS:**$16.00**

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 963-5608

By participating as a seller in the RNA Flea Market, I agree not to sell any food items, pornographic or obscene material or drug paraphernalia. If I violate this agreement, I will forfeit my right to participate and leave the flea market.

Signature :_____

Make checks payable to RIVERVIEW NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION.
Cut out this application and send to **Ernest Quintero, 187 Ogden Avenue, Jersey City, NJ 07307**
Attn: Flea Market

COMMUNITY UPDATES

Spring is around the corner and it is time to start preparing for the upcoming summer months. To this end, calls were made to various City officials to discuss the projects and problems in our local neighborhood.

Councilperson Bill Gaughan:

RNA has inquired about the status of additional public street lighting along Palisade Avenue. There seems to be resistance from City and PSEG to installing more lighting. Bill has assured RNA that he intends to continue to pursue this project.

Councilperson Nancy Gaynor:

Ms. Gaynor is presently working on getting the City to repair or replace the broken fencing all along New York Avenue. She is also going to have the Incinerator Authority remove all the garbage and debris that has been dumped on both sides of the cliff along this street. If anyone knows of who is dumping garbage and refuse on the back of the cliff please contact RNA at 798-0493 and Councilperson Gaynor at City Hall.

She is also working on getting the City to install guard rails at the bottom of Mountain Road to prevent dumping.

Incinerator Authority:

Certain people in our neighborhood seemed to use the winter as an excuse to ignore the rules to proper sanitation maintenance and recycling. Garbage was left on the curb in between collection pickups. Garbage was also left piled on private property and sometimes spilling over to the public sidewalk.

It is now springtime and there is no excuse! If you know of any neighbor: private owner or tenant that is leaving garbage out all week long or not packaging it properly for pickup, please call the Incinerator Authority to report them for these violations. The first time, a warning is given to the violator. The second time, a summons is handed out. Please make it your civic responsibility to help cleanup our neighborhood. The number to call is: 432-4645. Ask for Inspectors **Jim Ferris or Ray Spellmeyer.**

Riverview-Fisk Park:

On March 15th, Vito Brunetti had a telephone conversation with Rodney Hadley of the Parks Division to coordinate efforts to fix up Riverview-Fisk Park. The following were the areas discussed:

1) **Trees:**
   a) the dead tree in the center of the children's playground will be replaced;
   b) one dead tree on the east curb of Ogden will be cut down;
   c) tree branches overhanging the pavilion will be cut;
   d) however, no other trees will be planted until the eastside of the Park is renovated.

2) **Renovation of eastside of Park**: the Parks Division has put in a renovation proposal for the capital improvement budget for next year (this proposal could include the renovation of the retaining wall based on an engineering study).

3) **Benches**: three new benches on east side will be installed this spring (replacing the existing broken ones).

4) **Cliff Maintenance:**
   a) a promise to cut back and prune trees and shrubbery on the cliff that obstruct the view;
   b) the Division will write a memo to Incinerator Authority to request a cleanup of garbage on the cliff.

5) **PSEG**: the Division will inquire about the status of repairing the newly installed but non-working overhead lights in the Park.

6) **Fences:**
   a) the Division is looking for budget money for a permanent metal fence to enclose the children's playground playground - but in the meantime, Rodney will consult with Director Tom Hart to install a 4-6' wooden picket fence around play area;
   b) Rodney suggested that the City would buy materials (2-3' picket wooden fence) for a garden fence to protect the 200 daffodils (planted last fall) in the center garden if RNA would install it.

7) **Graffiti** on pavilion: the Division will contact John Reilly in Public Works to paint over the graffiti.

Meeting with Mayor's Aide:

On March 15, 1994 RNA conducted a walking tour of the neighborhood for mayoral aide, **Kevin Sluka** to discuss certain persistent problems that the City has not been able to resolve.

1) **Body Shop at 33 Griffith Street** : the following violations occur on a daily or weekly basis throughout the year (mainly after 5:00 pm):
   a) repairs are done on the street and sidewalk,
   b) vehicles are parked on sidewalk: preventing pedestrians from walking,
   c) vehicles are double parked: preventing cars from passing,
   d) vehicles, waiting to be repaired, are parked on street: preventing residents from using the street,
   e) the renting and using brick garages across the street to illegally repair vehicles, and
   f) the police and the Building Department (Tony Lambiase, the Zoning Official) have been contacted on numerous occasions to stop these problems.

2) **Public telephone** on Ogden Avenue in Riverview Park: we would like the City to either remove or move it to another part of the Park: away from the residential area.

3) **Cleanup of the Palisade cliff** behind Riverview-Fisk Park of garbage and debris that has been dumped for over ten years.

4) **Dead End at Ogden and Griffith:**
   a) repave roadway up to dirt road, and
   b) make alternate side of the street parking for street cleaning.

5) **234-236 Ogden Ave.**: condemnation hearings were held on October 26, 1993 by the Building Department. Mr.

(continued on page 4)

Meeting with Mayor's Aide (cont'd from page 3)

Micheal J. Regan, the Construction Official ordered that owner Norman Wilson, should monitor, clean and maintain these two properties till February 1, 1994. At that time, Wilson is required to start renovation of the existing structures on the lots. As of this date there has been no renovation of these properties.

6) **Continuous garbage problem** at 274, 242 and 202-204 Ogden Avenue :

a) not enough receptacles to hold garbage,

b) the litter and debris are being deposited on property in between pickup days and then spreading unto sidewalk, street, adjoining properties, Palisade cliff, neighborhood Park, and

c) both corners hav been turned into "dump sites."

POLICE BEAT:

Officer John Curtis has joined Community-based **Officer Andrew Lancellotti** as his partner to patrol our local streets from Central to Ogden Avenues. Officer Curtis is a local boy who grew up in our neighborhood, so he knows the Heights. He is just as dedicated and determined as Officer Lancellotti to stopping crime and arresting lawbreakers in our streets.

Officers Lancellotti and Curtis have been very busy during March. They have been concentrating their patrol efforts on Franklin, Hutton and Griffith Streets from Palisade to Central Avenues. They made two important arrests: one for gun possession and the other for purse snatching and resisting arrest.

On March 7th, the two officers broke up a dispute involving approximately 12 youths on Franklin Street and Sherman Avenue. On a tip from one of the teenagers, they pursued a sixteen year old female who was reported to be carrying a gun. When they approached the teenager, she ran away and threw the weapon into an alleyway. The gun went off but did not injure anyone. The weapon recovered was a .25 caliber semi-automatic. The female was arrested and taken to the Youth House. She lives on Zabriskie Street.

On March 12th, the two officers arrested a twenty-one year old hispanic male who had robbed a purse from a woman. They chased the perpetrator for several blocks from Hutton and Palisade to Griffith and New York Avenue. He resisted arrest and physically assaulted the two officers before being arrested. He also verbally abused the two officers before and after arrest. The perpetrator lives on Webster Avenue.

A third incident occurred to one of our own members. On March 9th, a woman was robbed of her purse on Franklin Street by two teenagers, as she was walking home from the bus stop in the evening. She was not hurt by the attack. The culprits have not been found but if anyone has any information about this crime, please contact Officers Lancellotti or Curtis at 547-5350 or 5359. This robbery was allegedly committed by a group of teenagers living in the Hoboken projects, calling themselves the Chi-chis.

As we go to press, RNA have learned that other robberies in the same area have occurred, allegedly comitted by these same people.

Community House

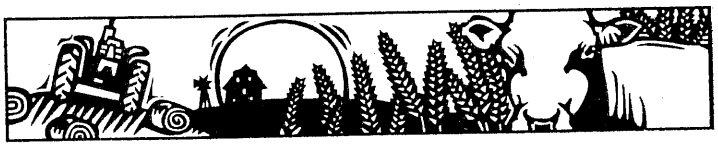
Captain Kane of the North District has suggested that RNA consider opening a community office on Palisade Avenue, run by local volunteers, to help combat local crime. Similiar to the neighborhood efforts downtown, the office would act as a place where volunteers could receive information about local problems and give it to the community-based police during their patrols. It could act as a safe-house, if anyone is in trouble on Palisade Avenue. Our police could use it as an unofficial mini-station for our community.

The requirements for this idea would be a Palisade Avenue storefront donated by a local owner, telephones, and most important, volunteers to staff the office during the evenings.

Community-based Support Seven Days a Week

Captain Kane of the North District has informed RNA that, in addition to Officers Lancellotti and Curtis, there are two additional community-based officers, **Sgts. Bennett and Kolodij** to address our needs. These two superiors are available seven nights a weeks for residents to contact with local crime problems (in case the other officers are unavailable or off-duty). They can be reached anytime, by calling the North District front desk at 547-5350 or 5359.

Captain Kane also described the attempts to make the community-based patrols more mobile. To accomplish this, he is instituting use of scooters and patrol cars. With the patrol cars, the officers will park and walk through different parts of the neighborhood.



CAMPAIGN TO KEEP LOCAL A&P OPEN

The local A & P supermarket located on Palisade Avenue could be in danger of closing its doors. It has come to RNA's attention that since the opening of the A&P superstore in North Bergen, the company is watching the profit margins of our local store to determine whether to keep it open for business.

Recently, **Councilwoman Nancy Gaynor** made inquiries to officials located at the company offices in Montvale, New Jersey. These officials answered that "the store will remain open as long as it produces a profit." The local store manager, **Robert Crowley**, has made the same reply to our numerous questions. Crowley also said that unfortunately the Palisade Avenue store cannot compete with the large superstores in the area.

RNA confirmed these statements with **Al Di Zenzo**, a regional Vice-President of A & P located in the corporate offices in Saddlebrook, N.J. Mr. Di Zenzo stated that "as of this date, there are no plans to close the Palisade Avenue store. There has been no decision to close but that is subject to change if there is a drop in the store's profit margin." (continued on page 5)

DO NOT CUT OUR FIRE DEPARTMENT

(The following article was written by a representative of the Jersey City Fire Department's Fire Officer's Local 1064.)

A fire in your home is something that most people feel will never happen to them, and facts show (thank God) that most of them will be right. But unfortunately, for a few, fires can and do occur in the homes of people who thought they would never experience the horror of fire. Even for those who escape with their lives and the lives of their loved ones, a serious fire in someone's home is devastasting and one of the most traumatic things they will ever experience in their lives.

The speed and destructive powers of fire are tremendous. Studies have shown that a fire starting in a waste paper basket can spread so rapidly it can completely engulf a typical living room in less than three minutes reaching temperatures of 1700 degrees Fahrenheit.

I speak from experience. As a 15 year vetern of the Jersey City Fire Department I have seen the physical, emotional and financial toll a fire takes on people hundreds of times. But I also can speak from the other side of the coin. Not long ago my Mother had a fire in her condonminium. Although no one was home at the time, and the fire, (not the smoke!) was limited to one room, it wreaked havoc on our lives for months. The fire started in my youngest brother's bedroom where a portable heater was plugged into a light duty extension cord. At the time of the fire there was no insurance policy for the personal contents of the house and my brother lost a few thousand dollars worth of personal belongings that he worked very hard for.

Try and avoid using portable heaters but when you have to, plug them directly into the wall outlet, or use an appropriate extension cord. Also you should always carry an insurance policy that covers the contents of your home, whether it is your own home or an apartment. The peace of mind is well worth the expense.

On another note, the City recently commissioned a study of the Fire Department. That study is currently being done. If the study is competent, comprehensive and objective, all should welcome it. However, all too often in the past, studies of this kind have been used to support preconceived ieas.

The Jersey City Fire Department and the citizens of Jersey City can feel confident and proud that the Fire Department has averaged a response time to fires of between three and four minutes. In a business where seconds count - this is critical. How manpower reductions and budget cuts might impact on this remains to be seen.

In the 15 years prior to 1990, the Fire Department averaged nearly 700 firefighters. Since 1990, we have averaged much less than 700 men. The Fire Department is currently staffed at about 615 firefighters and is anticipating large numbers of retirements this year.

Fire Captain Micheal Pierro

LETTER TO THE MAYOR

(The following is a letter sent to Mayor Bret Shundler concerning RNA's position to the City's proposal to cut the Jersey City Fire Department's budget and manpower.)

Dear Mr. Mayor:

At the March 8, 1994 meeting of the Riverview Neighborhood Association, there was a presentation made by **Fire Captains George Geyer and Micheal Pierro**, representatives of the Jersey City Fire Department's Fire Officer's Local 1064. (Captain Pierro is also a member of our neighborhood association.) They spoke to our group about the dangers of fire in general, but more importantly, the existing fire companies and manpower levels within the City's Fire Department.

At the end of the meeting, a motion was made to send a letter to the City (including your office and the council representatives) to inform you of RNA's position opposing any potential cuts to the budget or manpower levels. There was a unanimous vote supporting the specific motion that stated:

a) all existing fire companies throughout the City should remain fully manned; and

b) that RNA is opposed to any cuts in the Fire Department's budget or any reduction in its personnel.

A&P (continued from page 4)

For years we have heard of rumors to close our local A & P. We realize that because of the economic times we live in, there is a real chance that our store will close in the near future. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us as a neighborhood to save our local supermarket now. The time has come for our community to convince the A & P company that it is profitable to let our Palisade Avenue store remain open.

The most obvious thing that all persons can do is to simply shop at the store for their weekly food supply. The more business, the less chance it will close. Mr Di Zenzo has stated he would be willing to come to one of our monthly meetings to discuss the matter. He said he would be interested in discussing ways that the neighborhood could help keep the store in our community: a strategy that would benefit not only the community but the store as well.

This winter with its unrelenting snow storms, proved how important it was to have a local supermarket within walking distance. A superstore, located miles away, was virtually impossible to get to because of the weather and travel conditions. It is a real convenience to be able to walk to your supermarket - rain or shine.

There are possible ways that RNA can help stimulate business, such as a food raffle, advertising sales in our newsletteror provding discounts for our RNA members. Please come to the next meeting to help discuss this important issue for our neighborhood.

THE NEW CHAIR

I'll probably surprise some people by my stand on Christ Hospital's building plans but maybe you'll see it differently after you read this. By now you know that the Hospital wants to build parking facilities on their property to accomodate 350 cars. But did you know that they also want to improve their Emergency Room. Last year there were 38,000 visits to this E.R. - for a facility designed for 20,000 a year. So there were times when there wasn't enough room or personnel for a time conscious public - who would down grade the services because it took so long.

Remember that the sicker someone is, the higher the priority that person places on the services rendered. What happens is a domino affect. The personnel are hampered by the demands of proper medical attention to their patients, while at the same time realizing that there areother patients in the waiting room seeking their services and of course not enough beds to accomodate them. I've been at the E.R. and have seen the crowded waiting area. I just believe that things could be better.

About the parking garage - yes, it will cost money to park and some say it will increase traffic. But I say rubbish. If you're not well and need to go to the Medical Building or the Hospital, you're going whether there is a garage or not. But if there is a garage, that would make it easier for those who can't take public transportation. And don't you believe that if there is no garage that more people would use public transportation. If you have a car, you'll drive as we all do - all the time.

In addition, a Business Office Building is to be built at 226 Palisade Avenue to house the hospital personnel needed to do the paper work required in today's health care system. A problem arose with the demolition of 226 Palisade Avenue, which in turn destabilized the residential structure at 228 Palisade. Whether this second structure was unstable to begin with, is something to be determined by the City's Building Department.

I don't know the time table for this project but by moving non-essential paperwork outside the actual hospital they' ll have more room for the actual patient services facilities. As you're aware new technologies are allowing a greater success in diagnosing and treatment illness. There is a need for space to house this equipment, so you wind up needing new buildings or using the existeng space more efficiently. Hence more administrative personnel out of the main structure.

There are those of us who believe that every time another building on Palisade Avenue is bought by Christ Hospital we pay more taxes - because Christ Hospital, as a religious organization, is exempt from real estate taxes. But did you know that there are 402 beds available for you or me when the situation arises. The Hospital has the third largest payroll in the City (approximately $80 million).

The Hospital is sometimes portrayed as the bully on the block, and at times it has come close to living to that image. The biggest cause of this reputation was its lack of communication with the neighborhood. I'll go on record as a realist - larger and updated hospital structures are needed to continue to improve the services rendered. Just remember next time you are sick enough to require hospitalization you'll want the best and safest technology to help you heal, no matter what hospital you go to. Which brings up another thing. Nowadays, hospitals market themselves. So they all want to brag in their advertisements that they have the newest technologies and procedures. Health care for the forseeable future will be a hot topic because of the proposed reform plans.

I get all bent out od shape, when some people get a NIMBY attitude (Not In My Back Yard) because the hospital is in our neighborhood for our benefit.

Ernest Qunitero

ONE MEMBER'S OPINION

A lot will soon be said and written about Christ Hospital's newest proposal to build a 4-story parking garage on Palisade Avenue. I think it is important to state some realities about this project. No one is against the idea of a community hospital to cater to the medical needs of our residents. It is certainly good to hear when a resident, one of their family or a friend has been fortunate and treated by the Hospital. But the issue is not the medical care given by the Hospital - it is the attitude that the Hospital has toward its own local neighbors.

The problem is that Christ Hospital is not content to cater to just these local medical needs. It has ambitous plans to profit from the everchanging "medical game". At a recent meeting with the Hospital officials, it was stated that this garage is part of a large plan to enlarge and modernize their facilities. The garage is being built to attract private physicians for the Hospital's Medical Arts Building. Outpatients, so the Hospital's studies tell them, will not come if there is no parking. Therefore, the need to provide parking - not for the Hospital's inpatients or their visitors - but for the business of medical care provided by private corporate physicians.

We are concerned with the impact this garage and the additional traffic will have on our neighborhood. Will it disrupt traffic on an already congested Palisade Avenue? Will it necessitate the City removing curbside parking of the local residents on Palisade Avenue? What about the additional emission pollution from the cars as they are waiting to enter or exit this garage?

If the Hospital is concerned with the health and safety of its patients - maybe it should start with the negative impact their plans have on their own neighbors! Why not negotiate with the residents and come up with compromises? What about off-site parking and jitney service to the Hospital and the Medical Arts Building? What about making their employees use either public transportation or car pools to free up existing parking spaces?

What the Hospital has done - as it has done in the past - is simply announce a plan without neigbhorhood input and hope that they get their plan approved. Why not stop this insensitive approach to their plans and work with the residents. Together, a compromise can be achieved - taking into account the needs of all sides.

An interesting part of the debate is the attitude of some of our sister neighborhood and block associations west of Central Avenue. They seem to be on the side of

the Hospital and, at last report, are prepared to testify in favor of the garage proposal. Something about the need for "quality medical service."

It is these same groups that are now busily organizing against the proposal to put a new high school in the empty reservoir on Central Avenue. They are concerned it will relocate an unsolvable discipline problem from Dickinson High School to their own neighborhoods. They talk about how such a school will negatively affect the quality of their lives.

When one stops to think about this school proposal, isn't it really the same issue that the residents are fighting about with Christ Hospital? Isn't it a fear of the negative effect that both these projects will have on traditionally residental communities.

Maybe it is time to look beyond one's local block and think in terms of how these ambitous projects will affect the whole Heights community. Maybe it is time to start protecting not just one's street or local park - but their neighboring communities interests as well. Because what happens to one neighborhood today - will surely happen to another in the future. United we stand - divided we fall!

By the way, speaking of protecting residential communties, the Waverly Neighborhood group seems to have won its long fight to prevent a highrise project on the site of the old Pickleworks. At last report, there is a proposal to build two-family residential homes on the site. That is an example of what can happen if the community interests combine to protect themselves from negative proposals.

Vito Brunetti

APRIL

Spring is here,
April brings Easter, chocolate bunnies,
Marshmellow eggs and of course, jelly beans.
April showers bring May flowers and
Soon the RNA Flea Market will be here -
Happy Easter to All!

Madeline Rea

BUILDING DEPT. DRAGS FEET

I moved to Jersey City two years ago from Washington DC. My house on Palisade Avenue is over one-hundred years old and has a lot lof history. It's my intention to eventually restore the building to it's orignal condition. Because the Building Department holds immense power over a homeowner like mysilf, I take them very seriously. We go through the trouble of getting work permits and use contractors when necessary. In other words, we play by the rules and trust the system to work.

Maintaining and protecting a house like mine in this neighborhood is problematic. I rarely seek help from outside agencies because frankly they have not been helpful or even courteous. In one case however, I asked the Building Department for assistance in resolving what seemed to be a simple problem.

I have a neighbor who has stated his desire to make one of the borders of my property as ugly as he can. He has built up his yard so as to divert all his rainwater into my backyard. He piles debris in my yard to hold his fence in place, the fence also being in my yard. Since all his work was done without permits or regard to the Building Code, I assumed that the Building Department would help me. Five months later I would say that they just don't care.

We started our appeal with a letter and photographs hand delivered to the secretary of the Construction Official, Mr. Michael Regan. When there was no response and no action taken, we called to check on the progress, of the complaint. We were told that there was no letter and no record of a complaint. So another copy with new photographs was again hand delivered to Mr. Regan's secretary.

We also gave a copy to Councilman Gaughan with a note complaining about the Building Department's lack of interest. Thanks to Mr, Gaughan, an inspector was sent out to look at the work. Inspector Ed Ciolko was very courteous and agreed that the construction was insane. He ordered it all removed. The next day my neighbor walled off the front of his property so that no inspector could have access, and continued his "work." I spoke to Mr. Ciolko about a dozen times over the next two months. I was repeatedly promised that the Department would take action. I believe that he was speaking in good faith.

Because nothing was happening, we sent another letter with new photographs to Mr. Regan. We explained that work was continuing and that another fence had been put on our property. Finally I stopped calling the inspector and began calling Mr. Regan directly. Each time, his secretary took my messages. Not once was a call returned. Then oneday Mr. Regan answered his own telephone. He was very pleasant. He said that an engineer was being sent to look at my neighbor's house. I asked about the new fence on my property. He said that the only way to have it moved was to file a lawsuit. I told him about the diverted rainwater flooding my basement. He said that his basement leaked too.

More weeks past without word or action. I spoke with Mo Arafat, the engineer who finally inspected the house. He said that he was sent to look at the house and that he didn't care about the yard. He suggested that I write a letter to Mr. Regan. I was also told that my neighbor was given retroactive permits for his "temporary" fences. Five months have now passed.

Not only has the Building Department ignored my legitimate and documented complaints, but they gave my "neighbor" permission to put a fence on my property. A fence I can only legally move by filing a lawsuit.

The case is now in the hands of Kevin Sluka an aide to the Mayor. I hope that the City can not only resolve my situation but make the Building Department more responsive to the problems of our community. Individual inspectors that I have dealt with have allbeen competent and sympathetic. The problem seems to be higher up .

It's not much of a surprise that many people here have lost faith in the system. It would seem that if you play by the rules here you will fail. I believe that the Building Department must accept some of the blame for the continuing deterioration of our neighborhood. I also think that the RNA has a role to play in making sure our city services work for us. After all, were being taxed for the services.

Greg Brickey

From out of the NEIGHBORHOOD

Sgt. Anthony Park Association

Dear friends of RNA:

As those of you who were at the last RNA meeting know, your neighbors to the south have rejuvenated the Sgt. Anthony Park Association. From time to time, various issues have emerged which showed us the need to have a consistent organization to communicate our needs. RNA can take pride that it showed us by example how the renewal of a neighborhlood park, for example, can be the focus of community effort.

The City had long planned to renovate the Sgt. Anthony Park on Palisade Avenue, between the State Highway and Fleet St. We were fortunate to be able to have, before it was too late, some input into the proposed renovation. In February the Sgt. Anthony Park Association agreed upon some modifications in the city's plan, and with the help of Councilwoman Nancy Gaynor, submitted these proposed changes to the city architect, Robert Cerchio.

After some negotiations, the plans were modified to meet the most urgent requests of the neighborhood. Besides a rebuilt basketball court, the new park will have a playground structure, trees, grass, shrubs, and benches. The memorial to Sgt. Joseph Anthony, the World War II hero who grew up in the house across from the playground, will be cleaned and reinstalled.

We hope the park will attract, as it did in bygone years, young children and their parents, and that it will become a safe and pleasant place for us all. The Association hopes to make the usefulness and security of the park a continuing neighborhood preject. Our regular Association meeting are held on the third Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. in Room 231 of Dickinson High School. You are all welcome to visit, as you have made us welcome at your meetings.

Christ Hospital Update

Another neighborhood issue which concerns the Sgt. Anthony Association is the multi-level parking garage which Christ Hospital proposes to build on Palisade Avenue a block north of the park. The garage will have five levels which will accommodate 350 automobiles. This will bring the number of parking spaces which the hospital has in its various lots to 800--still not enough, according the hospital authorities.

Their "present plan" is to continue to acquire property along Palisade Avenue (they already own almost a mile) for the forseeable future. Although we regard Christ Hospital as a valuable institution and an asset to our community, the Association opposes the proposed garage because it will inevitably bring more traffic and pollution to an already over-burdened street. The garage will not , as the hospital claims, reduce street parking because experience has shown that drivers will not pay a fee to park until they have exhausted all the parking spots on the street. We continue to deplore, as we have done in the past, the loss of homeowners, families, and valuable cliff sites along the Palisades to what is evidently an insatiable drive for parking facilities.

It should be noted that the various parking lots owned by the Hospital are only fully utilized during one peak period of the day. Most of the people who will use the proposed garage, for example, will not be hospital patients but the clientele of the doctors who rent suites in the Medical Arts Building owned by the Hospital. We hope that the city will support an effort to balance the long-term needs of permanent residents and taxpayers to the temporary demand of parkers. Our position is that the Hospital should seek alternatives to on-site parking of private automobiles.

The Hospital'sgarage proposalwill come before the Planning Board in April or May.

Robin and Barbara Petrick

Jersey City Museum

"Art A La Carte"

"Art A La Carte" is a year-long series of monthly visits to Hudson County artists' studios.

Cost of each Art a la Carte evening is $8, with a discount offered for multiples of four evenings ($25 for Museum members, $28 for non-members).

Additional upcoming evenings are scheduled for April 1, May 6, June 3, July 1, August 5, Sept. 2, October 7, Nov. 4, and Dec. 2.

For further informaton or to sign up for a tour-demonstration call the Museum at **(201) 547-4514.**

Friday, May 6: 7 - 8:45 p.m. "Art a la Carte". Participants gather at 7p.m. at the studio of a local artist for a talk or demonstration, enjoy wine and cheese, and may continue the conviviality at an optional Dutch Treat dinner afterwards. Artist for the evening is Elizabeth Onorato, a painter who sees her works as reflections of the tension, anger, fear, aggression and decay that characterize major urban areas.

Other Events:

Saturday, April 16: 1-2;30 p.m. Educational program "Memory Book" create a book for yourself inspired by a special memory. You bring the memory--we'll supply the materials. This program is appropriate for ages 5 - adult and children must be accompanied by asn adult. this session is free. Instructor: Marjorie Branchaud.

Saturday , April 23: 10;30 am.-12;30 p.m. "Quiltmaking "Instructor: Jasn Rindge, certified teacher. Class meets April 23, 30, May 7, 21. Cost is $30 ($25 for museum members).

Saturday, April 30: 1-3 p.m. "Watercolor" Instuctor: Jean Cohen, prize winning artist and teacher. For beginners and experienced artist. Class meets Ap ril 30, May 7, 14 and 21. Cost is $35 ($30 museum members).

Saturday , May 14: 11am-noon. "Architectural Beauties of Downtown Jersey Clty" . A walking tour of some downtown Jersey City neighborhoods. Instructor: Marjorie Branchaud will described the buildings, in terms of events taking place at the time, they were built. Program is free.

Pre-registration is necessary. Call the Museum at **547-4514.**

Bulletin board

Cookies Made Easy

(The following recipe recently appeared on the "Hints from Heloise" column in the local newspaper.)

a) Preheat oven to 350 degress.

b) Choose a cake mix and add 2 eggs and half cup of vegetable oil and mix well. You can add other ingredients like nuts, raisins or chocolate chips if you like.

c) Drop teaspoonfuls of dough onto an ungreased cookie sheet, spacing about 2 inches apart.

d) Bake for 8 to 10 minutes and let cool before serving.

If you are like me and have tried other cookie recipes and failed, try this one. This is a no- fail cookie recipe!

Valerie Rea

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Most people do not realize that to keep a neighborhood association going requires participation of the members. Part of that participation is in the form of dues. Our annual membership fee is **$5** per person. Not a lot of money when you consider that this entitles you to nine issues of our newsletter, and if you live within the boundaries, voting privileges in RNA. Please support your association by paying your dues. Bring your dues to the next meeting, or make your check payable to RNA and mail to 232 Ogden Avenue. We need and appreciate your support.

The Executive Committee

CLEAN UP DAY

Spring is almost here and it's time to make the neighorhood presentable again.

It's time to clean up - not only our own properties - but the streets and sidewalks too!

Last year, RNA organized its first annual Clean-Up Day. It was a great success. The Clean-up is an event to organize the local residents to pick up garbage on Palisade Avenue and in Riverview-Fisk Park. It is also to make them aware of the need to keep our community clean.

Last year, Maria, Ernie and I went around the neighborhood talking to as many people as possible about RNA and our annual cleanup in order to recruit volunteers. Over 50 children volunteered to participate in this event, which included 20 kids from the P.S. 8 Neighborhoood Association, brought by Greg Butterfield. Ernie, Dorothy Katherine, Frances, Elliott (my son) and I supervised the clean-up. We gave out Heights T-shirts and ordered pizza and soda for lunch. The Incinerator Authority donated approximately $500.00 to RNA for our efforts, as part of their Clean Communities campaign.

This year I hope we can do the same if not better. I would like to design new T-shirts that RNA could give to the kids who participate in the Clean-up Day and also sell them at the flea market.

On a second spring weekend, RNA is also planning to have the Incinerator Authority give RNA four large dumpsters, which will be distributed throughout our neighborhood. The purpose of the dumpsters is to encourage our residents to get rid of any unnecessary items that they have lying around their house and property. It is also to discourage illegal dumping on the local streets and Mountain Road.

If anybody is interested in helping organize either of these clean-up activities, please come to the April 12th meeting to determine the dates for them.

Russell Pratt

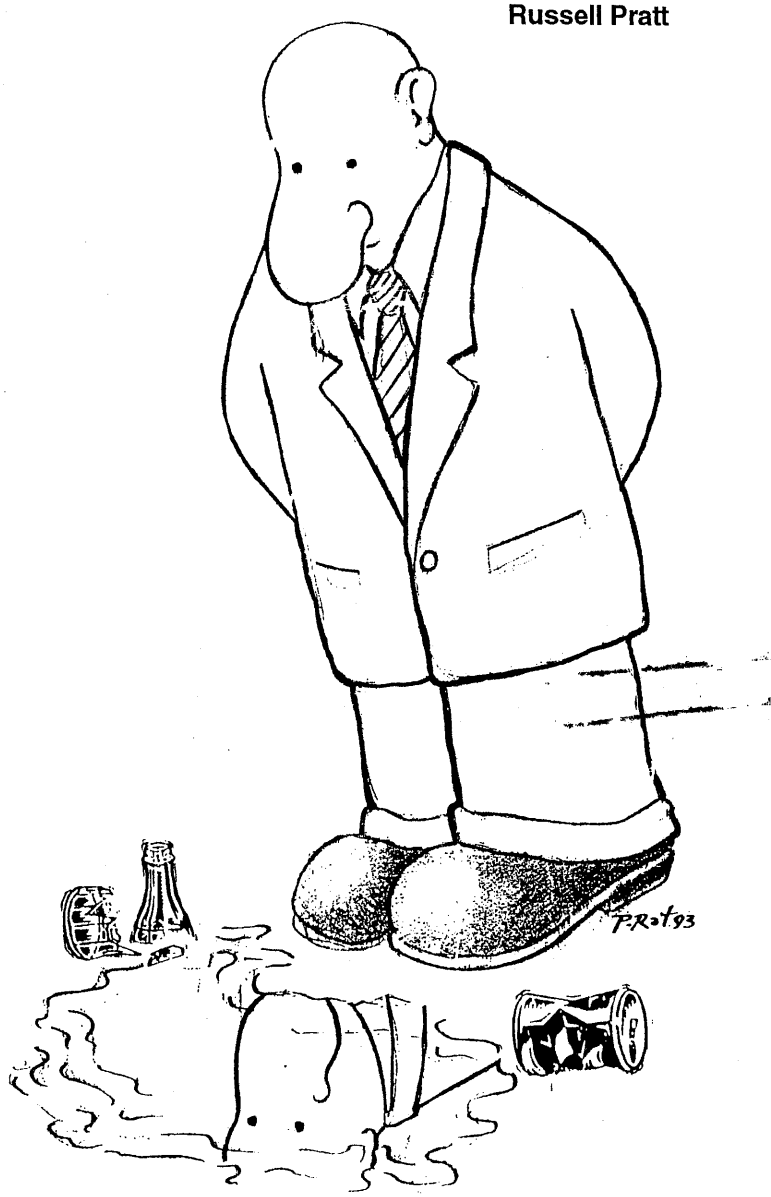


Illustration by Russell Pratt

MY EXPERIENCES: EASTER HOLIDAY

When most of the snow was gone andAsh Wednesday was here, we knew Easter was on its way. The nuns at school gave out these little Lenten boxes which we would put our change in for the candy that we had given up temporarily. Sometimes, we did not have the boxes to hand in, come Easter time.

We could not wait for Easter Sunday. Hot or cold, we came down in our Easter clothes. We all could not get new outfits, so we were handed down the clothes from the older child.

Mom busied herself making the Easter bread with the colored eggs. She would also prepare the Easter meat pie. The older children were busy preparing Easter baskets Saturday. The Fast ended after twelve noon. At supertime that night, we had a traditional supper of sausage and eggs and Easter bread.

Jack Rea

UPDATE ON PARK

AT CUNEO PLACE & OGDEN AVENUE

I recently spoke with our Councilwoman, Nancy Gaynor about the proposed park to be located on Ogden Avenue and Cuneo Place. The Councilwoman advised me that the specific proposal, which RNA had approved last fall, was the final version for our new park.

The suggested changes made by RNA after our meeting with the Councilwoman, were incorporated in a separate addendum and will be implemented when the park is built. Work on the park will begin sometime this year.

Anyone wishing to view the "final" plans should come to the April 12th meeting.

It would be great if all those interested in this new neighborhood park became involved in making sure that the park is one we can all enjoy. The local residents could plan and plant small gardens. The parents can organize different play activities and events for the children. In addition, we can also organize clean-ups of the area surrounding the park. In this way, we could not only get to know each other better, but ensure that our park becomes an asset, instead of an eyesore and liability in our neighborhood.

Speaking of clean-ups, Ms. Gaynor informed me that "lot clean-ups" had been suspended due to the numerous snow storms this winter, but that they should be starting soon and she would specifically request that the future park area be done.

All those interested in forming a special park committee, please contact me at 201-795-1205 or 798-3885 and we can plan to get together to discuss our new park and its possibilities.

Jean Hartmann Buzzard

CONTRIBUTE TO OUR NEWS LETTER

RNA is soliciting material for our newsletter. We are interested in anything you as our readers are interested in. Would you like to thank someone? Maybe you would like to complain about something. How about suggestions to help improve our neighborhood or City?

There's always a recipe, whether it is a family heirloom or something you just found out about. Creative writing is always wanted - whether it is a poem, a short story or memory about a local event or person.

The deadline for the next RNA Newsletter is Friday April 22nd. Either mail or drop off articles in mail box at 171 Ogden Avenue. Please mark envelope "RNA Newsletter".

Meeting Minutes (continued from page 1)

suspicious behavior in order to prevent a potential crime from taking place.

After a rather lengthy discussion regarding placing personal advertisments in the RNA newsletter, the group voyrd against the proposal. There was also a motion made to approach new shop owners on Palisade Avenue to place ads in the newsletter.

Christ Hospital is proposing a 4 story parking garage to hold 350 cars. It would be located between the Medical Ats Bldg. and the day care center. There is a possibility that this would create a need to make a third lane on Palisade Avenue so cars can make turns into the lot. The concern of the local residents is that they could eliminate an entire strip of residential street parking to accomplish this. There could be additional problems of air pollution, traffic and noise. The newly formed Sgt. Anthony Park Neighborhood Association is organizing meetings to oppose this project.

Our two Heights councilpeople, Tom DeGise and Bill Gaughan are proposing that the City build a new high school in Reservoir #3 to replace Dickinson. RNA will send a representative for the meeting that will take place on April 12th at the #28 school to discuss this important issue.

Barbara Petrick was the 50/50 winner.

Suzzanne Maroon, Secretary

NEWSLETTER STAFF

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CIRCULATION: Mrs. Tuzzo, Jack Rea,
ART WORK: Raquel Sweeney

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to announce the official expansion of the northern boundaries of the Riverview Neighborhood Association from Bowers Street to Congress Street on both Palisade and Ogden Avenues. (Riverview Neighborhood Association will now represent residents living on Palisade and Ogden Avenues from Congress Street to Cuneo Place.)

Adopted: December 12, 1992

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN ADVERTISING IN THE RNA NEWSLETTER. PLEASE MAIL (2) OF YOUR BUSINESS CARDS AND A CHECK (EITHER $10/ONE MONTH OR $60/NINE MONTHS) TO RNA, 232 OGDEN AVENUE, JERSEY CITY, NJ 07307

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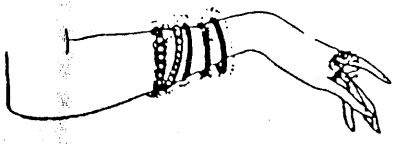

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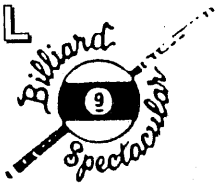

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FOR A BETTER LIFE IN THE HEIGHTS

COME TO OUR NEXT RNA MEETING ON
TUESDAY, APRIL 12th at 7:15 PM

The Shadow

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Theodore Conrad
Historical Advisor

COMMITTEES:

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

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NEWSLETTER

ANNUAL RNA ELECTIONS

The following individuals have been nominated for the annual RNA executive offices of:

Chairperson:
Ernie Quintero, Vito Brunetti, Greg Brickey .

Vice Chairperson:
Greg Brickey, Ernie Quintero, Mike Pierro.

Secretary:
Valerie Rea, Jean Buzzard, Kathy Packard.

Treasurer:
Jack Rea.

Sargent at Arms:
Mrs. Tuzzo, Carol Rebelowski.

All members are encouraged to come to the April 12th meeting to vote in this important election.